UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
37th meeting
held on
Friday, 20 November 1992
at 11 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 37th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ELARABY (Egypt)

CONTENTS

- Action on draft resolutions under disarmament item 63 and international security items 67 and 69

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-61944 2971V (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/47/PV.37
22 December 1992

ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 63, 67 AND 69

ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS UNDER DISARMAMENT ITEM 63 AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS 67 AND 69

The CHAIRMAN: This morning the Committee will continue the third phase of its work: action on draft resolutions. We shall proceed to take action, first, on the following draft resolutions submitted under international security agenda items 67 and 69: A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1, A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1 and A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1.

After completing action on those draft resolutions the Committee will take action on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4, submitted under disarmament agenda item 63 (a), "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session: report of the Disarmament Commission". I should like to note that the Committee also has before it, in document A/C.1/47/L.48, the text of amendments to draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4.

Before the Committee proceeds to take action on the draft resolutions, I shall call on those delegations wishing to make statements.

Ms. MAS (Canada): I wish to raise a point of order as to procedure. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.48 would like to put before the Committee a revised version, which we have handed in to the Secretariat. This is a non-paper; it could be described as an oral amendment. But delegations will not be able to consider it unless they have the non-paper before them.

We should appreciate an indication from you, Mr. Chairman, as to when it will be distributed, because, in our view, without it delegations will simply not be able to understand what they are being asked to consider.

The CHAIRMAN: The non-paper to which the representative of Canada has referred is being photocopied now, and will be circulated. In the meantime, we shall take up other draft resolutions.

Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf the non-aligned countries, draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1.

In recent years we have witnessed significant improvements in the global political and security climate. A new security situation is being shaped as a result of a profound change and transition in the international landscape. The important advances made in arms-limitation have also bolstered our hopes for a secure world. In many regions concerted efforts are being made to end conflict through dialogue and negotiation. Thus a new positive trend is discernible both globally and regionally.

Concurrently, however, the reduction of the probability of war in Europe and elsewhere has been accompanied by a dangerous increase in the number of conflicts, with the attendant consequences for stability and tranquillity. It is evident that solid foundations for regional and international security are still lacking.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

The need has therefore arisen to fashion viable security structures to maintain peace and to prevent the eruption of conflicts.

In sponsoring draft resolution L.45/Rev.1, the non-aligned countries believe that international security is no longer an exclusively military matter and that it has acquired a multi-faceted dimension. Of particular importance in this regard are the mounting social economic problems that remain the overriding concern for a vast majority of countries.

A breakdown of the global economic system can lead to major security problems. Hence development needs must be met if lasting security is to be achieved. We should also forge a new era of security by directing military spending to enhance the quality of life for people throughout the world.

Among the salient features of the draft resolution is the recognition accorded to generally accepted approaches to security, as reflected not only in General Assembly debates but also in this Committee.

It also takes into account the new strategic situation and its possible future evolution, while reaffirming the basic principles enshrined in the Charter.

First, the validity of confidence-building measures is explicitly acknowledged. However, to be effective such measures should be directed towards meeting the legitimate security concerns of the participating States, reconcile the divergent security and geopolitical perceptions of the States concerned, and be appropriate to the needs of the region. The focus should not be on military aspects alone, but should be broader, including political, economic, social and other non-military measures. They should also be based on openness and transparency in military matters and restraint in acquiring armaments.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

Secondly, in the context of the globalization of disarmament efforts, the sponsors believe that such endeavours at the global and regional levels should complement and reinforce each other. Progress at each level should contribute to the enhancement of the security of all States.

Thirdly, it is time to reconstruct the concept of collective action for peace and security under the Charter in order to facilitate the task of the United Nations in carrying out its primary function. We need a workable system of collective security in which all Member States have full confidence. Such a system alone will ensure the security of all States, especially the small and the weak. The sponsors believe that maintenance of international security is a multilateral issue whose complexities call for the cooperation of all countries. All Member States should participate in such endeavours within the framework of the United Nations. Thus the draft resolution seeks to promote our collective efforts to advance the cause of security. It also reflects the sea of change while recognizing the fact that the problem of security still dominates the international agenda.

The non-aligned countries have conducted intensive consultations with the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1 in order to reconcile divergent views on the item concerning international security. In an effort to take into account the views expressed by the sponsors of that draft resolution, the sponsors of L.45/Rev.1 would like to make the following amendments to it.

The first concerns paragraph 4. On the third line, the following words should be deleted: "and colonial or alien domination".

In paragraph 11, line 5, the following words should be deleted: "colonial or alien domination or".

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

In conclusion, I express the expectation of the draft resolution's sponsors that it will elicit the support of a great majority of Member States.

Mr. FOUATHIA (Algeria) (interpretation from French): It is an honour and a privilege for my delegation to introduce the draft resolution in document A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1, entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", sponsored by Albania, Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Morocco and Tunisia.

This draft resolution is the result of intensive consultations with the interested parties since the very beginning of this session, with a new, realistic and frank approach. This draft, which takes into account changes that have occurred in the international arena, reflects the new view of Mediterranean countries as to the form security and cooperation in that region should take.

(Mr. Fouathia, Algeria)

The main objective of the coastal States is cooperation in the Mediterranean region to strengthen peace and security in the region. It is this innovative approach that has guided us in framing this draft resolution, which has 9 preambular paragraphs and 14 operative paragraphs that reflect faithfully the situation in the Mediterranean area and take note of the various initiatives of the Mediterranean coastal States to achieve the main objective to which I have referred.

Thus, in the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution the General Assembly would recall, first of all, the link with the earlier consensus resolutions on the subject and then reaffirm the primary role of the Mediterranean countries in strengthening and promoting peace, security and cooperation in the area.

Further, the Assembly would recognize that security in the Mediterranean area is indivisible and that there is a need for closer cooperation among Mediterranean countries, and that this cooperation is likely to be enhanced by positive developments in the world, particularly in Europe.

While recognizing the efforts of the coastal States and their determination to intensify dialogue to solve problems and eliminate the causes of tension, the General Assembly would affirm that it was the responsibility of all States to contribute to the stability and prosperity of the region and to reaffirm their commitment to respect the Charter of the United Nations as well as the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States.

Further, the General Assembly would express concern at the persistent tension and continuing military activities in parts of the Mediterranean that hinder efforts to strengthen security and cooperation in the region.

(Mr. Fouathia, Algeria)

In the last preambular paragraph the General Assembly would take note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/524).

In paragraph 1 of the operative part, the Assembly would again this year reaffirm that there was a close link between security in the Mediterranean and in Europe. In operative paragraph 3 it would welcome the efforts by the Mediterranean countries in the continuation of the initiatives and negotiations now under way, as well as the adoption of confidence- and security-building measures as well as disarmament in the region.

While expressing satisfaction at the efforts of Mediterranean countries to eliminate the causes of tension and to promote equitable and lasting solutions to the persistent problems through peaceful means and to ensure the withdrawal of foreign occupation forces, and while seeking adherence to the principles of the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, the General Assembly would recognize that the elimination of economic and social disparities and other obstacles would contribute to strengthening international peace, security and cooperation among the Mediterranean countries.

Further, listing the various initiatives taken so far by the Mediterranean countries, the General Assembly would recall the decisions taken by the Second Ministerial Meeting of the Western Mediterranean Countries, held at Algiers in October 1991, and also mention the decision concerning the forthcoming summit meeting in Tunis.

The Assembly would also take note of all the relevant documents from the various forums on Mediterranean questions, including the Tenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Jakarta, the Helsinki meeting in July 1992, the meeting of the European Council of

(Mr. Fouathia, Algeria)

Ministers held at Lisbon last June, and the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean held at Malaga.

In the matter of support for the idea of convening a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean, the sponsors consider, this year too, that the idea should be encouraged, as should the ongoing regional consultations with a view to creating the appropriate conditions for convening such a conference.

Lastly, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit a report on means to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region; and would decide to include this item in the provisional agenda of the next session of the General Assembly.

In view of the considerations outlined above and in the light of the consultations that led to the drafting of this compromise text, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1 express the hope that this proposal will be adopted, as in the past, without a vote.

Mr. FEDOTOV (interpretation from Russian): On behalf of the delegations of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, and also of Albania, Croatia, Malta and Poland, I am happy to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Maintenance of international security", contained in document A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1.

The draft resolution we are introducing today is a short and straightforward one. The main thrust of the draft resolution is to give a new

(Mr. Fedotov, Russian Federation)

impetus to the First Committee's consideration of items relating to security in the light of the new tasks facing the United Nations in this era when the cold war and bipolar confrontation have ended. Another reason for its importance is that it has been decided to merge the consideration in the First Committee of the items on disarmament and on international security.

The changed realities of international relations require a constant search for new approaches to the consideration within the United Nations of the issues of international security. Dialogue on these issues must, it seems to us, be based on a constructive foundation conducive to harmonizing the approaches taken by States to strengthening the peacemaking potential of the United Nations and its principal organs and to giving additional impetus to the efforts of the Organization to establish world-wide cooperation and security and a more stable world order.

A solid basis for developing multilateral discussions in this important area is set out in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277).

(Mr. Fedotov, Russian Federation)

The report contains a serious effort to find, on a collective basis, adequate responses to the developing problems of international security. The draft resolution also takes note of the Secretary-General's ideas and proposals which are to be found in his report "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold war era" (A/C.1/47/7).

The draft resolution we are introducing does not contain any ready-made solutions for the Organizations's further consideration of the items on international security. By the next session of the General Assembly, States will have had an opportunity to express their views on this subject, and it is important that we should not fail to take advantage of any valuable idea or constructive proposal.

On behalf of the sponsors of the draft, I should like to express the hope that its adoption will help to establish the broadest possible dialogue on the maintenance of international peace and security and the adoption of decisions acceptable to all.

The original draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.47 submitted by the sponsors has been amended by the incorporation of some changes taking into account the wishes of a large number of countries and also the consultations held with the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1 hope that it will receive broad support from Member States.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Portugal for an explanation of vote before the vote.

Ms. MENDES (Portugal): The delegations of the five Mediterranean countries of the European Community, namely, France, Greece Italy, Portugal and Spain on whose behalf I speak, wish to express their common position

(Ms. Mendes, Portugal)

concerning draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1 entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediteranean region".

The five Mediterranean countries consider that close cooperation among the countries of the region with a view to further partnership is a precondition to achievement of the desired stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean.

We believe that a common commitment to generally accepted rules and principles covering, simultaneously, the aspects of security, economic cooperation and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as democratic values, should be the firm common basis for lasting and solid regional cooperation.

This aspect was emphasized by the European Council of Ministers in their Declaration at Lisbon on 25 June 1992. A new kind of relationship among all the nations in the area is required, one in which new avenues for economic cooperation and inter-cultural dialogue should be opened up within the framework of common security and respect for international law. Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1 constitutes a very commendable effort in that direction. The original sponsors, with which the five Mediterranean European countries have been in constant consultation during the elaboration of the draft, have shown a willingness to address a great number of relevant issues.

The five European Mediterranean countries wish to express the hope that the positive atmosphere that has prevailed this year will lead to the submission of a draft resolution by an increasing number of Mediterranean countries at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1, as orally revised. A recorded vote has been requested.

(The Chairman)

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the First Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1, "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", as orally revised this morning by the representative of Indonesia, was introduced by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the 37th meeting of the First Committee on 20 November 1992.

The Committee will now proceed to take a recorded vote on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1, as orally revised.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen

Against: United States of America

Abstaining: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted by 88 votes to 1, with 40 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the First Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1, "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", was introduced by the representative of Algeria at the 37th meeting of the First Committee on 20 November 1992 and is sponsored by the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Morocco and Tunisia.

With reference to paragraph 13 of the draft resolution, I wish to point out, on behalf of the Secretariat, that the report referred to in that paragraph will be carried out from available resources and, accordingly, should the resolution be adopted, there will be no additional programme budget implications.

The CHAIRMAN: It is my understanding that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. May I take it that the Committee adopts the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1, entitled "Maintenance of international security", was introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation at the 37th meeting of the First Committee, held on 20 November 1992. It is sponsored by the following countries: Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

The CHAIRMAN: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Crotia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Against: None

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Gabon, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen

Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.2 was adopted by 56 votes to none, with 67 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on representatives who wish to speak in explanation of their vote on the draft resolutions just adopted.

Mr. GÜVEN (Turkey): I should like briefly to explain my delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1, entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", which the First Committee has just adopted. As in previous years, my delegation joined in the consensus in favour of the draft resolution under this item. We did so to express our keen interest in the maintenance and strengthening of peace and security in the entire Mediterranean region.

I should note, however, that the draft resolution refers to certain meetings in which Turkey did not participate. I should like to state for the record that our having taken part in the adoption of the draft resolution should not be construed as our agreement with every element contained in the documents adopted at those meetings.

Mr. FEDOTOV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): The Russian delegation considers it necessary to explain the reasons for its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1. Russia respects the Non-Aligned Movement, on whose behalf the draft resolution was introduced. The merit of the text lies in its evaluation of the recent positive changes in the international landscape, characterized by the end of the cold war, the relaxation of tension on the global level and the emergence of a new spirit governing relations among nations.

We welcome the oral amendments proposed by Ambassador Wisnumurti of Indonesia. At the same time, we regret that a number of the provisions of the draft resolution are drafted in the spirit of the old confrontational formulations that were typical of United Nations debate during the cold war.

(Mr. Fedotov, Russian Federation)

Clearly, no one questions the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples, which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and have become established in international relations. Yet during a period when colonial empires have collapsed and when newly independent States have emerged to replace totalitarian structures, our approach to the principle of self-determination needs to be reviewed.

In a number of cases, unfortunately, extremist nationalistic forces are making use of the slogan of self-determination and are involving peoples in bloodshed and ethnic conflict. This poses a threat to the integrity of a number of States and dangerously destabilizes the situation in entire regions and, indeed, throughout the world. It hampers the search for a way to escape from economic backwardness and brings suffering, poverty and hunger to peoples.

For that reason, we cannot support the draft resolution's affirmation of the legitimacy of the liberation struggle of peoples.

(Mr. Fedotov, Russian Federation)

Formulated in such a general manner, this provision could be used to justify acts of violence which are a threat to international security. In view of all this, the delegation of the Russian Federation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1.

Ms. HERZL (Israel): Israel joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.46/Rev.1, which has just been adopted. However, had it been a paragraph-by-paragraph vote, Israel would have voted against operative paragraphs 2 and 5.

Mr. SHOUKRY (Egypt): I am speaking in explanation of my delegation's vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1, "Maintenance of international security".

My delegation was obliged to abstain in the voting on this draft resolution in the light of its procedural nature: we consider that it invokes a dual approach in addressing the reports of the Secretary-General "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) and "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7).

As delegations are well aware, the first of these important documents, "An Agenda for Peace", is currently being considered in the Working Group established by the President of the General Assembly and also by the Working Group established by the Security Council. The various aspects of this report, particularly those concerning international security, will be dealt with by the General Assembly in plenary meeting and by the Security Council. As for the report of the Secretary-General, "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", consultations undertaken during this session of the First Committee indicate a consensus concerning the convening of a renewed session of the First Committee during 1993.

(Mr. Shoukry, Egypt)

The delegation of Egypt has on many occasions expressed its gratitude for the submission by the Secretary-General of these two important documents, which it considers to be valuable contributions to the efforts aimed at strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations in dealing with the challenges that will face the international community in the future. My delegation would support the idea of delegating to the First Committee in the future the responsibility for evaluating and presenting recommendations on the ideas contained in these two reports in the area of the maintenance of international security, if the General Assembly so desires, since this would fall within the competence of this Committee.

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to express its appreciation to the sponsors of A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1 for their accommodation of various views expressed by the non-aligned countries concerning the original text of their draft resolution. These amendments provide an acceptable basis on which to build during the next session, when more time will be available for consultations on this important issue, an element which was not available during this session.

Mr. SADER (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation voted in favour of the two draft resolutions A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1 and A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1. We should like to explain why we voted in this way. We agree with the thrust of the two draft resolutions, although we have a few comments to make on both of them. We would like to say first of all, however, how pleased we are that both draft resolutions have been amended so that they are now compatible with each other, without any apparent contradictions.

As to A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1, we voted in favour because we believe that this is basically another opportunity for a constructive dialogue on the subject of international security. Having said that, we would also like to

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

say, first of all, that my delegation was glad that the sponsors agreed to withdraw the second preambular paragraph, which enabled my delegation to vote in favour. In my delegation's view, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security deserves much more than a mere archeological interest. It contains a set of fundamental principles that should govern international coexistence in the past, the present and the future. We feel that these principles are still valid and that they will remain so over time. Some of its paragraphs, however, might be reconsidered in the light of the present international situation.

Secondly, my delegation has some doubts about the title of the draft resolution and the new item to be introduced at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The phrase "Maintenance of international security" gives the impression that it tends to perpetuate the status quo, which no one would consider satisfactory. We do not feel that this was the sponsors' intention, but we do feel it necessary to mention that they could have found more positive wording for the title of the item.

Thirdly, as to the specific proposals in the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, we have no problem, although we believe that much of this work, as it relates to "An Agenda for Peace", is already being done within the Ad Hoc Group of the plenary General Assembly and in eight main and subsidiary bodies of the United Nations system. On the question of the report on new dimensions, we believe that this topic is being analysed in this Committee.

As to draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1, we fully agree with the objectives, but we would have preferred to see some change in the language of certain paragraphs. For instance, in operative paragraph 11, which was amended today in a positive way, we would have liked to see a more positive

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

reference to the peaceful settlement of disputes in conflicts involving foreign occupation, in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter.

Finally, my delegation would have liked to see these two draft resolutions improved even further and adopted by consensus.

Mr. BATIOUK (Ukraine) (interpretation from Russian): The Ukrainian delegation has asked to speak in explanation of its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.47/Rev.1. We voted in favour of that draft resolution because, following the revision and elimination of the former second preambular paragraph, the draft resolution as a whole became acceptable to us as a complement to draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.45/Rev.1.

At the same time, we note that the changes in the draft resolution did not fully do away with the original idea of its sponsors, and the draft resolution continues to stress only the new tasks in the maintenance of international peace and security and gives the impression that all the old tasks have already been carried out or have become meaningless.

We also feel that the new agenda item would sound better if it were entitled "Strengthening of international security" rather than "Maintenance of international security". Another reason why our delegation had some difficulty voting for the draft resolution is that despite the sponsors' aspiration, referred to in the second preambular paragraph, to promote a greater convergence of views among Member States as to the priorities of the United Nations in shaping a more stable international order, that aspiration was not realized during the stage of harmonization of the text of the draft resolution, a fact indirectly reflected in the group of its sponsors and in the results of the voting.

The CHAIRMAN: We proceed now to the amendments in document A/C.1/47/L.48 and to draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): As requested, we have circulated a "non-paper" - I believe it is now in the hands of all delegations - concerning draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4 and the amendments thereto in document A/C.1/47/L.48.

I am informed that the representative of Canada will be introducing a revised version of these amendments and will be reading the changes into the record. Of course, the "non-paper" has no official status and has been circulated only to facilitate the process of taking action on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.48.

Ms. MASON (Canada): As the Secretary has indicated, Canada, on behalf of the sponsors, will now introduce orally a revised version of the amendments in document A/C.1/47/L.48. For the assistance of delegations, a "non-paper" has been distributed that contains, in bold type, the revised version of the document. By way of explanation, the lighter type in the "non-paper" is the rest of the document. In other words, this "non-paper" before delegations represents draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4 as it would read, if it were amended in accordance with the revised version of document A/C.1.47/L.48.

There are two typographical errors in the "non-paper" which I should like to mention before formally reading the amendments into the record.

The first error is in the second of the new preambular paragraphs - which are, of course, the ones in bold type. In the first line, beginning, "Noting the support" the word "item" has been omitted after the word "new". The line should read,

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

"Noting the support for consideration of the inclusion of a new item in ...".

The other typographical error is in the third of the new preambular paragraphs. The acronym "UNDC" should be replaced by "the Disarmament Commission".

I shall now read out the three new preambular paragraphs:

"Noting the support for the proposal to include a new item in the agenda of the 1993 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, entitled 'General guidelines for non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction';

"Noting the support for consideration of the inclusion of a new item in the agenda of the 1994 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission entitled 'International arms transfers, with particular reference to resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991';

"Recognizing the need to further improve the effective functioning of the Disarmament Commission, and bearing in mind the experience of the 1992 substantive session when the agenda item on objective information on military matters was successfully concluded;".

We turn now to the next page of the "non-paper". The effort here was to make the document look as it would in its entirety. I must note, however, that although operative paragraph 7 is not in bold type there is one change from the present draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4. That text has a subparagraph (1), reading "[To be decided]". The proposed amendment here is that that subparagraph should be deleted and the remaining subparagraphs should be renumbered accordingly.

The new operative paragraph is numbered 8. It reads:

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

"8. Requests that the Disarmament Commission, at the aforementioned organizational meeting, consider the following matters:

"(1) The objective of moving the agenda of the Disarmament Commission to a three-item phased approach with one item in the first year of consideration, one item in its middle year and one item in its concluding year with the result that, in principle, one item is added and one item is concluded respectively at each substantive session:

"(2) That, in furtherance of the foregoing, the 1993 substantive session should be considered as a transitional year and therefore should consider whether:

"(i) Two items on the current agenda, namely those items referred to in operative paragraph 7 (2) and (3) respectively, should be concluded,

"(ii) One item - namely that referred to in operative paragraph 7 (1) - should be held over for conclusion at the next substantive session in 1994; and

"(iii) One new item should be included in the substantive agenda."

That, then, is the text of the revised version of document A/C.1/47/L.48, which, as required, I have formally read into the record. I should like very briefly to summarize these proposals.

Let us turn back to page 1 and che proposed new preambular paragraphs. The first one notes support for taking up in 1993 what has become known as the "Swedish proposal". The second notes support for considering the taking up in 1994 of what has been known as the "Colombian proposal". The third recognizes the need to improve further the functioning of the Disarmament Commission.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

In the operative part, paragraph 7 would stay as it is in draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4, apart from the deletion of the "[To be decided]" subparagraph. The new paragraph 8 has the effect of requesting that the Disarmament Commission, at its 1992 organizational meeting, consider what has been called the "phased approach", or the "Brazilian approach", to its agenda.

The sponsors hope that the revised version of document A/C.1/47/L.48 will be adopted by consensus.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take a decision on the amendment in document A/C.1/47/L.48, as orally revised. Its sponsors have requested that it be adopted without a vote.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): The draft amendments were originally contained in document A/C.1/47/L.48, which have been orally revised this morning by the representative of Canada, were introduced by the representative of Canada at the 37th meeting, on 20 November 1992. They are sponsored by the following countries: Australia, Austria, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Mauritius, Mongolia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Philippines, Portugal and Spain.

The CHAIRMAN: The sponsors have requested that the amendments in document A/C.1/47/L.48, as orally revised, be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, the Committee will act accordingly.

The amendments, as orally revised, were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4 as a whole, as orally revised. Its sponsors have asked that it be adopted without a vote.

I call on the Secretary.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4 as a whole, as orally revised, has the following sponsors: Armenia, Brazil, Cameroon, Egypt, Finland, Hungary, Malaysia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Romania, Sweden and Uruguay.

The CHAIRMAN: The sponsors have expressed the wish that draft resolution L.4 be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, the Committee will act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on representatives who wish to explain their positions.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom): I should like to explain my delegation's position on the resolution that has just been adopted.

My delegation warmly welcomed the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) reforms which were negotiated in 1989 and came into effect progressively in 1990 and 1991. Instead of a system in which any item could, in effect, be placed on the agenda by a vote of the First Committee and could stay there indefinitely, it was decided to have an agenda limited to a maximum of four items at any one time, and that in principle each item should remain on the working agenda for no more than three years. This implied a carefully negotiated consensus on the group of items which would form the agenda at any given time. Such a process was successfuly completed when the current three items were placed on the agenda.

Under the new arrangements the practice appeared to be accepted that the First Committee resolution on the UNDC report acted as a vehicle to record whatever consensus existed. We have worked for just such a solution this year. A large area of consensus does exist, and there is still plenty of time to complete the negotiations on the agenda before the session opens in April next year.

My delegation will approach those negotiations with an open mind. We do not consider ourselves in any way bound in those negotiations by the resolution that has just been adopted by this Committee. It is the view of my delegation that it would be wise to postpone the decision until after the resumed meetings of the First Committee next March.

I should perhaps say a word also about the substance of the issue, and explain why my delegation is not yet ready to accept the proposed additional

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

agenda items. We believe that it is important to have a clear objective when accepting an item for consideration by any arm of the international disarmament machinery. Initially we felt that both the items proposed for the UNDC lacked such clarity of objective and in fact were likely to overlap to an unacceptable degree with consideration of aspects of the same subjects in other forums.

Following reformulation of the item springing from resolution 46/36 H, we are content that consideration by UNDC could be focused on a real problem - illicit arms transfers - and need not overlap either with the work of the Conference on Disarmament on transparency in armaments or with future work of the General Assembly and the 1994 Expert Group on the United Nations Arms Register.

We had hoped that we could have had similar success in clarifying the objectives of the proposal to consider non-proliferation. Our minds are not closed, but we have serious concerns lest UNDC discussion, if too broad in focus, could have detrimental effects on the existing regimes and on the work of other forums. This is not to say that our concern for the subject of non-proliferation has decreased. The reverse is in fact the case. Our opposition to the present proposal arises because of the importance we attach to the subject and the level of our concern that it should be properly addressed.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): The United States delegation, also, wishes to explain its position on draft resolution L.4 as amended by document L.48/Rev.1, just adopted by consensus.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

We believe it is contrary to the procedures of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), which decides its own agenda by consensus, for draft resolution L.4, originally presented by the members of the UNDC Bureau, to appear to prejudice when a particular item should be added to the substantive agenda before there is agreement on this point.

We would point out further that the third and fourth preambular paragraphs are inaccurate. The proposals that are noted were not made for the years 1993 and 1994 that are respectively identified.

My delegation wishes to reaffirm for the record that the outcome of this resolution, even though it was adopted without a vote, can have no effect on the 1992 UNDC organizational meeting next month, or whenever it may take place.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has now concluded its consideration of all agenda items on disarmament and international security matters.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to remind members of the Committee that, in accordance with the Committee's programme of work and time-table, on Monday, 23 November, the Committee will begin its general debate on the consideration of and action on agenda item 66, namely "The question of Antarctica". I therefore urge those delegations wishing to participate in the general debate on that question kindly to inscribe their names on the speaker list as soon as possible in order to enable the Committee to fully utilize the conference facilities available to it.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
38th meeting
held on
Monday, 23 November 1992
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 38th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PATOKALLIO (Finland)
(Vice-Chairman)

CONTENTS

- General debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions on the question of Antarctica

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-61962 3115V (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/47/PV.38
22 December 1992

ENGLISH

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Patokallio (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 66

GENERAL DEBATE, CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, this morning the Committee will begin its general debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions on agenda item 66, the question of Antarctica.

You may recall that this item was included in the agenda of the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, in 1983. At each subsequent session the Assembly has been seized of the question of Antarctica, a subject that has assumed great importance in our interdependent world.

At the last session of the General Assembly, three reports of the Secretary-General on the subject were considered by the Committee: A/46/512, which related to participation in the meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties; A/46/583, which related to the establishment of the United Nations-sponsored station in Antarctica; and A/46/590, which related to the state of the environment in Antarctica and its impact on the global system.

(The Chairman)

At its last session, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 46/41 A and 46/41 B. In that connection, I invite the attention of delegations to the reports of the Secretary-General in documents A/47/541, A/47/542 and A/47/624, called for by those two resolutions. The reports address the particular concerns expressed in the resolutions.

I should also like to point out that, in pursuance of paragraph 8 of resolution 46/41 A, the Department of Public Information has continued to explore the promotion of public awareness of Antarctica and its ecosystems. In this respect, the Department published a background paper in August 1992 entitled Protecting the Earth's Last Great Wilderness: Antarctica (DPI/1222).

As members of the Committee are aware, the Antarctic environment and its dependent ecosystems are increasingly vital to life on this planet. The record reflects that the Committee's proceedings have made an important contribution to the safeguarding of this fragile, complex and multifaceted region.

Accordingly, it is my hope and that of the Chairman of the Committee that our debate concerning the future of Antarctica will be pursued in a constructive manner: that would indeed be in the best interests of all nations. Undoubtedly, cooperation in this pristine region is imperative since Antarctica should for ever be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and should never become the scene of international discord. Moreover, Antarctica should be maintained as a nuclear-free zone of peace, free of military activity.

Before calling on the first speaker, I would like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the Committee will have at its disposal three days - a total of six meetings - for the completion of this agenda item.

(The Chairman)

It was decided by the Committee that the list of speakers for the general debate on agenda item 66 will be closed today at noon and I therefore urge delegations to inscribe their names as soon as possible. It was also decided that the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under agenda item 66 is today at noon.

Mr. REDZUAN (Malaysia): At the outset, allow me on behalf of the Malaysian delegation to thank you for your very constructive opening statement.

My delegation is pleased that the question of Antarctica, which has been debated in the Committee for the past 10 years, continues to be a subject of growing interest in the international community. World-wide recognition of the need for concerted international action to protect Antarctica's environment parallels widely evident international concern over the massive problem of the environment, which is at the centre of the attention of the international community at the present time. Antarctica has gained a special place in peoples' hearts and minds; international cooperation could build on mankind's conscience to protect this last great wilderness from greedy human exploitation. At the same time, protection of the environment of Antarctica and of its unique position as a storehouse of mineral, marine and other resources is being seen as a crucial part of protection of the global ecosystem. There can be no doubt that the adoption of the Madrid Protocol on Environmental Protection by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties in October 1991 and the widely acclaimed outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held at Rio de Janeiro in June this year demonstrated the commitment of the international community to undertake the measures necessary to tackle the environmental problem for the betterment of the future. My delegation wishes to see the Committee build on this common

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

and serious concern to bring about the participation of the entire international community, under the umbrella of the United Nations, to consider and decide on the future of Antarctica.

My delegation would like to applaud the agreements reached at the Rio Summit which recognized the value of Antarctica as an area for the conduct of scientific research essential to the understanding of the global environment. We believe that this recognition is important, taking into consideration the fragility of the environment and ecosystems existing in Antarctica, where the activities and results of the scientific research community could produce results of global significance. On this note my delegation would like to emphasize that, following the decision reached at the Conference in Rio, data and information from this research should be made available. In this regard, we remain convinced that only the United Nations has the capability, with its world-wide networks, to provide excellent service in receiving and distributing this information to Member States and non-governmental research organizations. The international community should build on the positive developments of the Rio Summit to promote the importance of safeguarding the environment on Antarctica and its impact on the global environment. Accordingly, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties should, on the basis of the agreement reached at the Rio Summit, hold an annual seminar or symposium on the subject.

Another development which my delegation wishes to emphasize is this year's important contribution by the Secretariat and the Department of Public Information in producing a background document on Antarctica. It is a commendable effort indeed to have produced concise and useful information on this subject. We certainly believe this excellent effort should continue as

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

there are so many aspects of the question of Antarctica that could be publicized for the benefit of delegations and the public at large. We also believe that the Department of Public Information should further promote and publicize the issue of Antarctica, with the purpose of achieving better understanding on the part of the international community. We believe that through educating and informing the masses, concern over environmental problems, as in the case of Antarctica, would be galvanized that would, in turn, trigger greater governmental attention and action. We maintain that it is important for the United Nations to take the lead in promoting public awareness. At the same time, it is the expectation of the international community, in the light of the present international political climate, that the United Nations will give equal importance to issues such as the environment, which have a direct impact on future generations.

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

My delegation regrets that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have yet to appreciate fully the important role of the Secretary-General on the issue of Antarctica. Despite our numerous calls in earlier years, the Consultative Parties failed to extend an invitation to the Secretary-General or his representative to attend the recent Seventeenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, held at Venice from 11 to 20 November 1992. From the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/541), which highlights the report of the Sixteenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting held at Bonn in October 1991, it is clearly evident that there were important agenda items to which the Secretary-General could have contributed or been a party in the discussion of, for example, the items on the human impact on the Antarctic environment and on the promotion of international scientific cooperation. These are important topics on which the United Nations has the necessary expertise, and the United Nations should therefore be fully involved in the discussions. It is pointless, on the one hand, to agree on the important link between the Antarctic continent and the global environment, a topic of massive importance on the agenda of the General Assembly, and, on the other hand, to note that the discussions among the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties did not include the Secretary-General or his representative.

Having said that, my delegation noted with appreciation the positive move by the Consultative Parties to provide the Secretary-General with the report of their sixteenth meeting. That demonstrates the type of cooperation one could build on to bring about international cooperation and consensus in the future. The report is indeed a great help in understanding the various aspects of the activities of the Consultative Parties, which are of relevance to the rest of the international community, for example those regarding the

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

question of environmental monitoring, international Antarctic scientific and logistic cooperation and air safety in Antarctica. We have noted the report of the sixteenth meeting of the Consultative Parties and the sentiments expressed in the opening statements of the participants, which clearly reflect the common desire and interest in safeguarding the Antarctic environment, a responsibility that my delegation strongly believes should be shouldered by the entire international community under the umbrella of the United Nations. It is wrong to say, as the Consultative Parties do, that since more and more people have been visiting, exploiting and leaving traces on Antarctica, responsibility for the effect of these activities on the continent has accrued to them. With the ever-increasing prospect of more tourists visiting this remarkable place, which has the inviting and unique characteristic of being mankind's wilderness, surely the responsibility for it would be better managed and handled in the spirit of the international cooperation under the banner of the United Nations.

In a more positive tone my delegation takes note of the involvement of the United Nations specialized agencies and programmes, such as the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization, at the invitation of the Consultative Parties, to participate in the Sixteenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting at Bonn last year. It was very encouraging indeed for experts from those United Nations agencies and programmes to be invited to the Bonn meeting. My delegation remains hopeful that invitations for future meetings could also be extended to the Secretary-General or his representative.

My delegation notes with deep appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on the state of the environment in Antarctica (A/47/624),

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

which touches on the efforts undertaken in various quarters on the protection of the Antarctic environment. However, my delegation wishes to express its concern over the delay in distributing this document, which was not available until 19 November 1992 although it is officially dated 11 November 1992. The lateness of the distribution of the document seriously impairs our ability to obtain assessments from our capitals. However, after looking through the report my delegation fully concurs with the views expressed by the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, as stated in paragraph 14 of the report, that environmental monitoring remains a fundamental element of Antarctic research, environmental management and conservation. We also noted the statement:

> "It is also significant that while some environmental monitoring has already been undertaken by various operators in the Antarctic, there seems to be a lack of standard protocols." (A/47/624, para. 16)

This is precisely what my delegation has been stressing all along, namely, the need for full international participation, under the mandate of the United Nations, in the consideration of matters of this importance, since monitoring the impact of human activities on the environment is an important process in the protection of the Antarctic environment. Certainly, the lack of standard protocols in this area is a grave concern to us. The report also indicates that:

> "SCAR also noted a lack of global environmental databases with respect to the Antarctic, despite the fact that many concerned non-governmental organizations and individuals had access to important and relevant data." (A/47/624, para. 15)

My delegation is fully aware of the need for Member States to receive available data in order fully to understand and comprehend the situation on

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

the ground. On this note, my delegation wishes to request the Secretary-General to make available as official United Nations documents the extracts of data received by the Secretariat from various organizations in the course of the preparation of future annual reports.

Last year, the Malaysian delegation welcomed the positive step of the signing of the Antarctic Treaty Protocol on Environmental Protection in Madrid in October 1991, despite that document's many shortcomings. We recognized that the Protocol is a measure to protect the environment of Antarctica against the destructive consequences of human activities on that fragile continent. It is a very important document indeed, especially when we consider that three years ago the same countries that signed the Protocol had earlier signed another convention to open up the continent for mineral exploitation. There is a general interest in seeking the speedy entry of the Protocol into force. However, we understand that to date only Spain has ratified the agreement - in July of this year. A few other States have stated their intention to ratify the Protocol later this year or next year, but judging by the current rate of adherence it may be many years before the Protocol is legally binding. In addition, it should be borne in mind that it takes only one of the Consultative Parties to rescind the Protocol by refusing to ratify it - as was the case with the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resources Activities (CRAMRA). Thus, the ability of the Madrid Protocol to protect the environment in Antarctica effectively offers little assurance that the provisions will be implemented at all at this present juncture.

It is evident from what has occurred here in the Committee that the signatory countries are not moving in the direction of the provisions of the

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

Protocol to set up key institutions such as a secretariat and a committee for environmental protection. This raises serious questions on the immediate and effective implementation of the Protocol as envisaged by the world community late last year. From the information we have received thus far it is apparent that at the recent Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting at Venice the member countries failed to address the key issue of liability and were sidetracked on the question whether a further annex to the Protocol is needed to cover tourism. I have touched on this issue earlier, and the Malaysian delegation is pleased to note that the Consultative Parties are fully aware of the consequences and problems created by the ever-increasing number of tourists going to that continent. My delegation and many others wish to be reassured by the Consultative Parties that all these developments are not mere smokescreens to delay the important objective of the implementation of this Protocol, which is to ban mining.

My delegation recognizes the weaknesses in the Madrid Protocol, but it is our utmost desire to see that the Protocol meet its objectives in all seriousness for the sake of the protection of the environment in Antarctica. It is a milestone on the road to permanent protection for Antarctica, and it is our earnest hope that the Consultative Parties will dedicate themselves to swift ratification and full implementation of the positive measures contained in the Protocol. We also urge the Consultative Parties to continue to strengthen the provisions of the Protocol, to develop new annexes as warranted, to negotiate a liability regime and, most important, to agree to a permanent ban on all commercial mineral-resource activities in Antarctica. At the same time, we call on the Consultative Parties to involve the United Nations in the process of strengthening the Madrid Protocol.

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

My delegation notes with deep regret that South Africa has yet to be excluded from participation in the meetings of the Consultative Parties. We regret that the repeated appeals by the international community to the Consultative Parties to exclude South Africa from participation at meetings of the Consultative Parties have continuously been ignored by the Parties.

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

In conclusion, I should like to underline that Malaysia is, on the whole, encouraged by the increasing international cooperation on environmental and scientific research in Antarctica. With the gradual involvement of the United Nations we believe this will help strengthen the overall climate of peace and cooperation in Antarctica.

Mr. HURST (Antigua and Barbuda): Five hundred years ago, in 1492, two worlds collided. That collision completely altered the fate of human civilization. It also set in motion a drive to conquer powerless peoples and govern resource-rich lands, vast oceans away from the kingdoms of the explorers. My Caribbean was at the epicentre of the 1492 collision. The small islands of our Caribbean were systematically denuded of their forest cover to allow for the planting of sugar cane, cotton and tobacco. Because of our tropical resilience, the beauty of our Caribbean islands has returned and remains legendary, attracting millions of visitors to our shores each year.

Antarctica is also beautiful, but it has no forests: it is certainly not tropical, and it is clearly not resilient. Antarctica, vast in its icy expanse, is indeed fragile and it is of critical importance to our planet and our daily lives equal to that of the Earth's rain forests. Our intention is to help place the United Nations in a favourable position that would result in the preservation of Antarctica for our benefit and for that of future generations.

For 500 years, from Columbus to Rio, man's history in the pursuit of wealth has been brutish. The knowledge of that history stirs fear in the hearts of my countrymen. We see the United Nations as bastion of good, capable of responding meaningfully to harmful threats which mankind will continue to create for itself. In the course of the next 10 minutes or so, I

(Mr. Hurst, Antigua and Barbuda)

shall therefore share with this body our major concerns regarding Antarctica and our proposals for successfully addressing them in this forum.

One year ago, during the debate on Antarctica in this Committee, the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda expressed its appreciation and acclaim for the response by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to one of the many concerns expressed by the States not parties to the Treaty. I refer to the prohibition of mining and oil exploration in Antarctica. The Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty is a framework agreement made up of 27 articles and five annexes; it was signed by the 26 voting parties to the 32-year-old Antarctic Treaty in Madrid, Spain, on 3 October 1991.

It may be recalled that the express objective of the Madrid Protocol is to protect the unspoilt environment of Antarctica from the destructive consequences of human activities. When that agreement banned all mining and oil exploration in Antarctica for 50 years it annulled the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, which had previously allowed mineral exploration in Antarctica. We were pleased.

Antigua and Barbuda regards the Madrid Protocol as a positive first step by the Consultative Party States. It consolidates environmental measures under the Antarctic Treaty into a single document and leads us to conclude that environmental measures which were largely recommendations under the Antarctic Treaty will now become legally binding. Furthermore, the Protocol calls for increased cooperation among Consultative Party States on environmental matters. It establishes a Committee on Environmental Protection and provides for procedures for the settlement of disputes.

Nevertheless, the provision of the Madrid Protocol on Environmental Protection which enables 19 of the 26 Consultative Party States to overturn

(Mr. Hurst, Antigua and Barbuda)

the ban after 50 years has caused, and still causes, considerable concern among States non-Consultative Parties. My delegation reiterates its call to the Consultative Party States to reconsider this provision. Antigua and Barbuda is of the view that Antarctica's virginal tundras, unpopulated and undisturbed, ought never to be violated. A temporary alternative to a ban in perpetuity will, we hope, be a provision to ensure that the agreement of all 26 Consultative Party States is obtained before the ban can ever be lifted.

Quite frankly, given the critical importance and the unique attributes of Antarctica, we reject the exclusive and perhaps discriminatory arrangement which places the fate of Antarctica and, consequently, that of the rest of the world in the hands of 19 States. Our objection is based on two factors. First, the high price of entry into the Antarcic Treaty "club" is beyond the means of most States. Consultative Party "club members" are required to maintain an active scientific station in Antarctica. Secondly, not only is the exercise expensive and, hence, exclusionary, but it has also resulted in overcrowded conditions in several of the more accessible ice-free areas on that pristine continent. This crowding has led, in turn, to an increased accumulation of atmospheric pollution from vehicles, the disposal of more solid and toxic wastes and the accumulation of other common forms of pollution from human settlements and activities. How reasonable is it to expect 153 other States to join in this massively destructive rush?

Human activity in Antarctica results in significant adverse modifications to habitats of species of native mammals, birds and plants. Moreover, permits have been granted for killing wildlife and destroying plants. This is justified, we are told, as the unavoidable consequences of the construction and operation of scientific support facilities. It may be recalled that

(Mr. Hurst, Antigua and Barbuda)

earlier measures for the protection of fauna and flora did not permit killing for those purposes.

Such wanton destruction in this pristine wilderness is not limited to the land. There has been a dramatic reduction in the population of whales, krill and fish stocks. This observation reinforces the wisdom of the bans and the catch limits which were adopted by the Commission for Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) in 1989. Human activity also caused vast numbers of seals, birds and other non-target species to be caught and killed inadvertently, sometimes in the course of fishing and at other times by lost or discarded fishing gear.

It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the Madrid Protocol does not provide a functioning mechanism which protects the fragile terrestrial, glacial and marine environment of Antarctica. Moreover, the Protocol does not envisage a meaningful role for the United Nations or its organs, such as the United Nations Environment Programme, in matters of great importance to that continent's environment; the Protocol does not satisfy the call of the States not Consultative Parties for openness and non-discrimination, since only Consultative Party States are allowed to participate in meetings of its Environmental Committee.

(Mr. Hurst, Antigua and Barbuda)

While we welcome the decision of the States that are Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the final report of their sixteenth meeting, we regret sincerely their decision to ignore United Nations General Assembly resolutions requiring that the Secretary-General or his representative be invited to meetings of the Consultative Parties.

Antarctica demands a strong United Nations presence. My delegation thus reiterates its call for the establishment of a United Nations research station there and an end to the proliferation of such stations. My delegation is of the firm view that the United Nations is the most appropriate body for control of Antarctica. That being the case, we have repeatedly requested that the Secretary-General be invited to play a leading role in decisions affecting Antarctica.

United Nations supervision of the scientific programmes that are currently under way in Antarctica would end the unnecessary duplication, arrest the generation of waste, and focus the resources that are now available. Research undertaken following international dialogue and negotiations would help to minimize the adverse impact of scientific activities on the continent, while spreading knowledge among States Members of the United Nations.

In this regard, we recall Agenda 21 - the blueprint for action adopted at the Rio Conference. Agenda 21 states:

"In recognition of the value of Antarctica as an area for the conduct of scientific research, in particular research essential to understanding the global environment, States carrying out such research activities ... should, as provided for in article III of the Antarctic Treaty, continue to:

(Mr. Hurst, Antigua and Barbuda)

"(a) Ensure that data and information resulting from such research should be freely available to the international community;

"(b) Enhance access of the international scientific community and specialized agencies of the United Nations to such data and information, including the encouragement of periodic seminars and symposia."

(A/47/624, para. 18)

We all agree that many environmental problems transcend national boundaries and narrow national interests, necessitating a coordinated effort among States. We agree, further, that the success of national and global environment programmes requires mutually reinforcing strategies and the participation and commitment of all levels of society. Governments, non-governmental organizations, industry, the scientific community and private citizens must all contribute. The time is ripe for universal, concerted effort to address the many issues pertaining to Antarctica, particularly those that have an impact on the global environment.

We now realize that Antarctica is a monitor of the health of the global environment. Because of its remoteness, undisturbed data on past climatic conditions are recorded in its ice cover, and it is therefore an invaluable tool for measuring historical and current levels of pollutants and other global climatic changes. In addition, the Antarctic acts as a giant laboratory for much science that cannot be conducted elsewhere. The discovery of a gaping hole in the ozone layer above Antarctica in 1985 has forced us as members of the international community to pay more attention to our behaviour. We have limited the production and use of ozone-destroying gases, such as chloro-fluorocarbons, and eliminated lead from our gasoline. More - much more - will change with the passing of time.

(Mr. Hurst, Antigua and Barbuda)

As the world's largest wildlife sanctuary, Antarctica is home to over 100 million birds, including seven species of penguins and six species of seals; it is the summer feeding-ground for 15 species of whales; and it supports one of our Earth's unique, highly adapted and specialized ecosystems. Its amazing ice formations, vast penguin colonies, awe-inspiring vistas of mountains and glaciers reinforce my delegation's desire to ensure that this vast continent will remain unspoiled.

Because Antarctica is mankind's last frontier on Earth, the idea of its being a world park is viable. As a world park it would undoubtedly provide protection for the environment; scientific research could be coordinated; and the continent would become an area of peace, free of nuclear and other weapons and all military activities.

Five hundred years after the collision of two worlds and the conquest of paradise, we are certain that Antarctica will not be allowed to suffer irremediable despoliation, as did the Caribbean. The future of Antarctica as a common heritage of all mankind can best be preserved through the United Nations. Therefore, as we debate the future of our "last continental wilderness", let us not forget that there is an urgent need for the international community to act collectively to protect this treasure trove of mankind. Together we can make this bastion of purity and silent beauty a symbol of hope, a unique example of mankind's capacity to preserve its past, present and future. We must act today. Tomorrow will be too late.

Mr. JUSUF (Indonesia): My delegation welcomes yet another opportunity to consider the question of Antarctica, especially in the context of the changing perceptions concerning that pristine environment. As in the past, we are participating in the debate in a spirit of cooperation as our collective endeavours to achieve consensus on this question continue.

(Mr. Jusuf, Indonesia)

First of all, we deem it essential to reiterate the basic objectives of the Antarctic Treaty - in particular, peaceful use, non-militarization, non-nuclearization, the promotion of scientific research, and protection of the environment. These objectives are shared by an overwhelming majority of States, yet the efforts to achieve a broad-based multilateral framework to deal with various aspects of Antarctica continue to be repudiated. Thus, decision-making with regard to activities in Antarctica that impinge upon the critical interests of a majority of States remains the exclusive prerogative of a minority of States.

It is pertinent to recall, in this regard, that in recognition of Antarctica's importance for scientific research - in particular, research concerning the global environment - the Rio Conference of last June requested that data and information be made available and called for enhanced access for the international scientific community to such data and information.

Likewise, the tenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Jakarta last September, while welcoming the adoption of the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty, which designated Antarctica as a natural preserve for peace and science, called for greater access to, and wider dissemination of, information concerning the activities, negotiations and agreements of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. The Conference also emphasized the importance of establishing viable links with specialized agencies and modalities to encourage and facilitate the participation of developing countries in scientific activities conducted in Antarctica.

Regardless of how Antarctica is managed in the future, or under whose auspices, my delegation regards several principles as fundamental.

(Mr. Jusuf, Indonesia)

First, non-consultative parties should be accorded a genuine role in decision-making within the framework of the current arrangements. This would increase confidence in the Treaty and thereby strengthen the Treaty system as a whole.

Secondly, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties should seek the participation of all relevant specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations with a view to encouraging their input and drawing upon their expertise.

(Mr. Jusuf, Indonesia)

This is particularly relevant with regard to environmental, meteorological and other scientific research programmes, which are increasingly turning to global, interdisciplinary studies requiring coordination with international organizations and institutions engaged in similar activities in other parts of the globe. In fact, there is a compelling need for an organic link between these organizations and the activities of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties.

Thirdly, scientists from the developing countries should be provided with opportunities to participate in research programmes, including the sharing of expertise as regards specialized equipment and logistical support in setting up their Antarctic programmes. This would go a long way towards removing the aura of exclusivity surrounding present activities.

Fourthly, there is a need to establish a non-exclusive and internationally acceptable regime for the exploration and development of Antarctica's resources. This would provide for the equitable management and sharing of benefits for all mankind.

So far, the Atlantic Treaty Consultative Parties have not shown themselves willing to address the genuine concerns of non-Treaty States in a purposeful way. My delegation therefore calls upon them to give serious consideration to these and other proposals and to respond positively to them, for we believe that their implementation will strengthen the Antarctic Treaty and lead to a system accountable to the international community. It is self-evident that flexibility on the part of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties is essential if the future stability of Antarctica is to be ensured. Such a manifestation of flexibility would provide tangible proof of their intention to reach the consensus which has eluded us in the past.

(Mr. Jusuf, Indonesia)

Consequently, in expressing our support for the draft resolution before us, we urge the Atlantic Treaty Consultative Parties to reconsider their positions and to respond positively to the legitimate interests of the international community.

Mr. KHANAL (Nepal): Each year in the debate on this agenda item in the First Committee, my delegation has stated that we have no problem with the aims of the Antarctic Treaty. The Treaty is an important instrument for ensuring that Antarctica will for ever be used for peaceful purposes. The Treaty seeks to put international cooperation in the Earth's last wilderness on a permanent basis. We also welcome the fact that the Treaty sets aside territorial claims, prohibits all military activities, nuclear explosions and the disposal of radioactive waste on the continent We believe that the Antarctic Treaty system, while ensuring scientific research on the continent, represents a network of measures for conserving and protecting the biological diversity and for preserving the regulating properties of the biosphere.

These instruments notwithstanding, doubts have been expressed in recent years about the impact of human activities on Antarctica. Pollution and the environmental impact of activities related to scientific research and tourism have been well documented. The prospect of opening the continent for mining heightened international concern. There is today a global consensus on the need for concerted action at the international level to protect the Earth's climate from dramatic and unpredictable changes. Antarctica is at the very heart of the debate on the environment and the fragility of its ecosystem is universally recognized.

My delegation therefore believes that fears regarding changes triggered by activities in Antarctica need to be addressed through a universal regime based on a cooperative relationship with the United Nations. Measures limited

(Mr. Khanal, Nepal)

to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties cannot fully address the global concerns. We have noted that the report of the Sixteenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting was transmitted to the Secretary-General. We have also noted that some specialized agencies and programmes were represented at that meeting. While these are important developments, we find it difficult to understand the continued exclusion of the United Nations from the work of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties.

The Earth Summit held earlier this year at Rio de Janeiro established the significance of Antarctica in a global context. We are pleased with the commitments made by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties under chapter 7 of "Agenda 21" (A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I)).

My delegation has expressed its satisfaction at the signing last year of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty. We call for a speedy ratification of the Protocol by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. We also hope that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties will take the necessary steps to redress the lack of a monitoring and implementation mechanism in the Protocol.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the reports he has submitted on this item. Document A/47/624 is an important contribution to the understanding of the role of Antarctica in the global environmental system. We are also pleased with the materials produced by the Department of Public Information of the United Nations, which are aimed at promoting public awareness concerning Antarctica. It is most desirable for the United Nations to have an active role in order to ensure that all activities in Antarctica, the common heritage of mankind, are being conducted in the best interests of all.

(Mr. Khanal, Nepal)

It is on the basis of these considerations that my delegation has once again joined in sponsoring the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Malaysia (A/C.1/47/L.54). The sponsors have made every effort to display a positive attitude to the recent developments. We sincerely hope that the cherished convergence of views on this important item will be achieved in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. VERGAU (Germany): I am speaking today on behalf of all States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty.

It has been clear since the question of Antarctica was first injected into the United Nations General Assembly that consensus is the only constructive basis on which to consider Antarctic issues. Each year since 1985, however, consensus has eluded us. It has eluded us because we have been faced with draft resolutions over which there was no possibility of achieving consensus. The reason is simple - the purpose of the draft resolutions has been to call into question an important and effective Treaty system to which many States Members of the United Nations are party. The draft resolution continues to ignore the advances which have been made by, or are in the course of being implemented by, the Treaty system and fails to reflect adequately the role of the Treaty system in furthering international cooperation in Antarctica. Meanwhile, each year, the Antarctic Treaty system continues to demonstrate its ability to resolve, in an innovative fashion, the political, scientific and environmental issues that face us in other parts of the planet.

For more than 30 years, the Antarctic Treaty has united countries active in Antarctica or those which have demonstrated by accession their interest in Antarctica in a uniquely successful agreement for the peaceful use of a continent. Scientific research conducted by the States parties, and the

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

cooperation between them, have shown the world that nations can work together for international peace and cooperation. Antarctica is the largest unspoiled landmass on Earth, and States parties have committed themselves to its study and to the protection of its unique environment. The Antarctic Treaty is an example of the way in which nations can work together successfully to preserve a major part of this planet for the benefit of all mankind as a zone of peace where the environment is protected and where freedom of scientific investigation exists for the benefit of all.

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

The Antarctic Treaty was adopted by 12 States in 1959, at a time when other parts of the world were the arena of international tensions. The Governments of Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States, all of which had conducted scientific research in Antarctica during the International Geophysical Year, 1959, agreed that the unique opportunities which Antarctica presented to science should not be jeopardized by disputes among them. The Treaty, which entered into force on 23 June 1961, ensures that in the interests of all mankind Antarctica will for ever continue to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and will not become either the scene or the object of international discord.

The Antarctic Treaty contains far-sighted provisions for achieving its objectives, inter alia prohibiting measures of a military nature, nuclear explosions and the disposal of radioactive wastes. The Treaty guarantees freedom of scientific research and promotes international scientific cooperation. It provides for the exchange of detailed information about activities in Antarctica and allows observers complete freedom of access to all areas of Antarctica to ensure that the provisions of the Treaty are complied with by the States Parties. Thanks to these safeguards, the Treaty has been successful in achieving its objectives.

The strength of the Antarctic Treaty continues to grow and the 41 parties to the Treaty now represent 70 per cent of the global population. We encourage the accession of more States to the Treaty.

In accordance with article IX of the Treaty, representatives of the Parties meet regularly to exchange information, to consult on matters of common interest, and to formulate and recommend to their Governments measures in furtherance of the objectives of the Treaty.

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

In 1964 the Parties adopted the Agreed Measures for the Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora. Subsequently two separate conventions, the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals and the Convention on the Conservation of Marine Living Resources, entered into force.

On 4 October 1991 in Madrid the Parties adopted the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty. The Protocol supplements the Antarctic Treaty and designates Antarctica as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science in recognition of the continent's global importance. It establishes a comprehensive, legally binding regime to ensure that all activities undertaken by Parties in the Antarctic Treaty area are consistent with the protection of the Antarctic environment and its dependent and associated ecosystems. It stipulates that activities relating to mineral resources other than scientific research shall be prohibited.

The detailed environmental-impact-assessment procedures annexed to the Protocol constitute a key element of the regime. Further annexes concluded at the Consultative Meeting in Bonn in October 1991 cover the conservation of flora and fauna, the prevention of marine pollution and waste disposal, and management of specially protected areas. Strong measures on compliance, response action, inspection and environmental monitoring are included, as is provision for binding settlement of third-party disputes.

Thirty-six States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty, including all the Consultative Parties, have signed the Protocol and have committed themselves to taking the steps necessary to achieve its earliest possible entry into force. The Consultative Meeting recently held in Venice has shown that this is likely to become a reality. In the meantime, the Parties will ensure that the provisions of the Protocol are applied to their activities in Antarctica

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

as quickly as their legal and constitutional processes will allow. Adoption of the Protocol in 1991 was a fitting tribute to the thirtieth anniversary of the Antarctic Treaty and demonstrates the Parties' resolve further to strengthen the Treaty.

The Protocol is further evidence that the Treaty Parties are aiming at conservation of Antarctic resources. It is a testimony to the fact that the Treaty Parties are fully alive to the environmental concerns shared by all delegations.

The Antarctic Treaty Parties are fully committed to scientific research in Antarctica. Since the 1950s the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) has played a prominent role in developing cooperation among Antarctic scientists. Antarctica is a pristine laboratory of world-wide significance and has enabled researchers to detect and monitor, for the benefit of all mankind, global environment phenomena such as the depletion of the ozone layer, global warming and sea-level changes. Other areas of scientific research that benefit from the unique opportunities offered by the environment of Antarctica are expanding rapidly. The States Parties have ensured that the results of these important research efforts are freely available.

The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings have also consulted and cooperated with other scientific, technical and environmental international organizations, including a number of United Nations specialized agencies, which have shared their expertise and information as appropriate. These organizations include: the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission; the International Civil Aviation Organization; the International Maritime Organization; the World Meteorological Organization; the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; the International

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

Hydrographic Organization; the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research; the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; the International Whaling Commission; and the United Nations Environment Programme.

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

The results of the Seventeenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, held in Venice from 11 to 20 November of this year, underline the high degree of cooperation among the States Parties and their dedication to the sixth continent. As usual, upon completion of the report on the Seventeenth Consultative Meeting, a copy will be forwarded to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Secretary-General's report of 20 October 1992 (A/47/541) is proof of the fact that the Antarctic Treaty constitutes a modern dynamic system which continues to provide for timely and comprehensive solutions to all questions facing Antarctica. In the concluding remarks, the Secretary-General characterizes the Antarctic Treaty system as follows:

"Information outlined in documents available, particularly those provided by Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, have addressed several aspects of Antarctica. The final report of the Sixteenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting details scientific research and initiatives pursued and developed over the last 30 years. In that regard, it should be noted that international cooperation has been achieved at the level of Governments, some United Nations specialized agencies and programmes, and relevant international and non-governmental organizations.

"Documents submitted, such as those summarized above, appear to reflect that the existing Antarctic Treaty system continues (a) to foster international cooperation; (b) to adapt to changing environmental priorities; and (c) to elaborate new mechanisms in line with innovative scientific research. They also indicate interest in renewed global efforts in line with increased public awareness, particularly as regards Antarctic ecosystems, and growing world-wide environmental concerns." (A/47/541, paras. 27 and 28)

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

The Antarctic Treaty Parties are aware of the significance of Antarctica for global environmental issues and therefore provided detailed information for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) preparatory process, including information on the recent conclusion of the Protocol of the Antarctic Treaty on Environmental Protection and the far-reaching annexes to it.

The constructive influence of the Antarctic Treaty Parties was particularly apparent in the preparations for UNCED, especially during the lengthy and arduous work on the formulation of Agenda 21 in the Preparatory Committee. An agreement was reached to include the following paragraph in the UNCED document "Agenda 21":

> "In recognition of the value of Antarctica as an area for the conduct of scientific research, in particular research essential to understanding the global environment, States carrying out such research activities in Antarctica should, as provided for in Article III of the Antarctic Treaty, continue to:
>
> "(a) Ensure that data and information resulting from such research should be freely available to the international community;
>
> "(b) Enhance access of the international scientific community and specialized agencies of the United Nations to such data and information including the encouragement of periodic seminars and symposia."
>
> (A/47/624, para. 18)

In the view of the Antarctic Treaty States, as well as of all other States participating in the Rio Conference, this reference in Agenda 21 treated the question of Antarctica in the UNCED context in a fair and balanced manner.

(Mr. Vergau, Germany)

We hope that the consensus reached within UNCED may serve as a model for understanding in the General Assembly, allowing us to refrain from the exercise of voting on unhelpful and divisive draft resolutions in the future. For all those Members of the United Nations interested in the future of Antarctica, as well as all those interested in developing scientific activities there, we reiterate our invitation to accede to the Antarctic Treaty and to take advantage of the existing institutions and experience of the Antarctic Treaty Parties. This, we submit once again, would be a constructive and responsible approach to the question of Antarctica.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
39th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 24 November 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ELARABY (Egypt)

CONTENTS

- Tribute to the memory of Mr. Kaysone Phoumvihan, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

- General debate, consideration of and action on draft resolutions on the question of Antarctica (continued)

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/47/PV.39
29 December 1992

ENGLISH

92-61974 3206V (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. KAYSONE PHOUMVIHAN, PRESIDENT OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

The CHAIRMAN: It is with deep regret that I must inform the Committee of the passing of His Excellency Mr. Kaysone Phoumvihan, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. On behalf of the Committee, and on my own behalf, I request the representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of his country and to the bereaved family.

I invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of the late President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The members of the First Committee observed a minute of silence.

Mr. THAMMAYONG (Lao People's Democratic Republic): My delegation is deeply moved by the words of sympathy and condolence expressed on your own behalf, Mr. Chairman, and on behalf of all the members of this Committee on the passing of the President of our country, Mr. Kaysone Phoumvihan, which occurred on 21 November in Vientiane.

Mr. Kaysone Phoumvihan had been ill for some time. With his demise, our country has lost one of the most glorious sons of its contemporary history. Therefore, on behalf of my delegation, I should like to express our profound gratitude for your expression of sympathy in this painful moment.

AGENDA ITEM 66 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE, CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Malaysia, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.54.

Mr. REDZUAN (Malaysia): On behalf of the co-sponsors, Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Mauritius (on behalf of the African Group), Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Yemen and my own country, Malaysia, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.54, "question of Antarctica", for consideration by the Committee and the General Assembly. This year, there will be only one draft resolution on this subject, as the African Group has chosen to merge its draft into the main text.

I wish to highlight specifically the positive developments on the question of Antarctica that are reflected in the draft resolution this year, especially in relation to the successful outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio in June this year. We believe that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have expressed their commitment to enter into international cooperation on environmental issues, which we could build on in a global spirit to protect the Antarctic environment. In this regard, we urge the Consultative Parties to consider the possibility of organizing an annual seminar or symposium concerning issues relating to the environment, to convene beginning in 1993, with the broadest international participation possible.

We believe that through this annual seminar or symposium, a closer and deeper understanding of the problems involved in protecting the Antarctic environment, which have many direct links to the global environmental system, could be shared by the rest of the international community and especially by those in the research fields.

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

In the draft resolution, we welcome the positive move by the Antarctic Treaty Contracting Parties to provide information to the Secretary-General by submitting the report of the Sixteenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting. It is very useful for us to follow the progress of discussions among the Consultative Parties, as they have a great bearing on the overall consideration of the question of Antarctica. The submission of the report is in line with our call for greater transparency, and we urge the Consultative Parties to continue providing such information and more documents covering all aspects of Antarctica in the future.

We acknowledge the involvement of some of the United Nations specialized agencies and programmes following the invitation of the Consultative Parties to participate in the Sixteenth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting last year. We are encouraged by this development, and we continue to urge the Consultative Parties to extend an invitation to the Secretary-General or his representative for future meetings.

The draft resolution also highlights the positive developments on the part of the United Nations Secretariat including that of the Department of Public Information in producing a background paper entitled Protecting the Earth's Last Great Wilderness: Antarctica. It is a very commendable effort indeed. We look forward to seeing more of such publications on Antarctica produced in the future, within existing resources, as we believe they will contribute immensely to educating and raising the awareness of the general public on the need to preserve the continent of Antarctica and to keep the management and use of Antarctica in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

We also noted the important contribution of the various organizations to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/624). In view of

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

the importance of the information from these organizations to delegations and to members of the public, we also request the Secretary-General to explore the possibility of issuing, as official documents of the United Nations, excerpts of the data received from these organizations in future annual reports, within existing resources.

We call on the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to prevent South Africa from participating fully in the meetings of the Consultative Parties pending the attainment of a non-racial and democratic government in that country.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize, on behalf of the sponsors, that we have chosen to take a constructive approach in our draft resolution this year. Our objective is to build on the encouraging increase in international cooperation on the environment and on scientific research in Antarctica. It is our sincere hope that the gradual involvement of the United Nations in the growing international cooperative effort will help strengthen the overall climate of peace and cooperation in Antarctica.

Mr. REFAQAT (Pakistan): The continent of Antarctica, known for its vastness and unique isolation from the rest of the world, holds special importance for a number of reasons, particularly its significance for international peace and security, its effect on the Earth's climate and the environment, its unspoilt ecology and its terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, which are of great value to the scientific community.

Pakistan has remained firm in its commitment to the protection and preservation of the delicate environment of Antarctica and its associated ecosystems, and time and again it has expressed opposition to the exploitation of mineral resources in Antarctica.

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

We are indeed encouraged by the ban on prospecting and mining in and around Antarctica for the next 50 years, in accordance with the Madrid Protocol on Environmental Protection. It is our sincere hope and expectation that in due course a permanent ban will be imposed on prospecting, exploration and exploitation of minerals in Antarctica.

A number of scientists and environmentalists have lent increasing support to the preservation of Antarctica, which continues to retain its pristine qualities. Some of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have also lent support to the call of the international community to preserve Antarctica as a nature reserve or world park and to ensure the protection and preservation of its environment and its dependent and associated ecosystems for the benefit of mankind. Pakistan believes that Antarctica is the "common heritage of mankind". Its protection and conservation are the common responsibility of the entire international community.

In this context, it may also be recalled that at the tenth summit meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in Jakarta, the Heads of State or Government emphasized "the geopolitical, scientific, environmental and climatic significance of Antarctica to all mankind".

The report of the Secretary-General on the state of the environment in Antarctica (A/47/624) takes note of the fact that the significance of Antarctica in the global sense was recognized by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in June this year at Rio. Furthermore, Agenda 21, adopted at that Conference, recognized the value of Antarctica as an area for the conduct of scientific research, in particular research essential to the understanding of the global environment.

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

The scientific community in Pakistan maintains a keen interest in peaceful research in Antarctica. As a result, Pakistan was able to successfully conclude its scientific expedition to Antarctica last year with the establishment of the Jinnah Antarctic Research Station. Pakistan's interest during the scientific-research process in Antarctica pertained to, among other things, the ecology of polar seas; ice-sheet dynamics; monitoring of weather conditions; detection of trace matter in ice, air and sea and its environmental effects; and geological and geophysical mapping of the area around the Jinnah Station. This expedition was entirely peaceful and scientific in character and carried out its studies in accordance with the highest environmental and ecological standards.

It was indeed a challenging task for a developing country such as Pakistan to organize and successfully manage such an enormous undertaking. Apart from the direct scientific benefits, the success of the expedition is bound to promote further the cause of scientific research in that crucial area.

It is with a sense of profound appreciation that my delegation wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance that was given to us by a number of friendly countries that are also parties to the Antarctic Treaty system in enabling us to successfully conduct our first-ever scientific expedition to that continent. We hope that the scientific community in Pakistan will continue to receive such help and cooperation in carrying out its future scientific research work on Antarctica.

In conclusion, we would like once again to express our complete support for all efforts aimed at imposing a permanent ban on the exploitation of mineral resources in Antarctica and our deep and abiding commitment to the

(Mr. Refaqat, Pakistan)

protection and preservation of the delicate environment of Antarctica and its associated ecosystems.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to inform members that tomorrow morning, the Committee will proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.54, submitted under item 66 of the agenda, "Question of Antarctica". Subsequently, the Committee will proceed to take action on draft decision contained in document A/C.1/47/L.53 proposed by the Chairman under item 63 of the agenda.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I wish to inform the Committee that, subsequent to the issuance of document A/C.1/47/L.54, the draft resolution referred to under item 66 of the agenda entitled "Question of Antarctica", the delegation of Mauritius has informed the Secretariat that Mauritius has now signed the list of sponsors of the draft resolution on behalf of all the States members of the Group of African States.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.